D. Risk Communication Plan Template

An effective risk communication plan includes these **seven critical components**. The rest of this document contains **information and tools** to help your agency develop and document these components.

Components of an Effective Risk Communication Plan

1. ROLES

    a. Designate **staff responsibilities**

    b. Designate **spokespersons** for public health emergency issues

2. PROCEDURES

    a. Develop procedures for **information verification and clearance/approval**

    b. Develop procedures to **coordinate with important stakeholders and partners** (e.g., public health regions; law enforcement)

    c. Develop procedures to **secure needed resources** (space, equipment, people) to operate the public information operation during a public health emergency 24 hours-a-day/7 days-a-week, if needed

3. AGREEMENTS

    a. Create agreements on **releasing information** (who releases what/when/how)

4. CONTACT INFORMATION

    a. Develop regional and local **media contact lists** (including after-hours news desks)

    b. Obtain contact information for **potential stakeholders and partners** in an emergency

    c. Identify **subject matter experts** willing to work with you during an event

5. CHANNELS OF COMMUNICATION AND MESSAGES

Components of an Effective Risk Communication Plan

    a. Identify **communication channels** to the public, stakeholders and partners

    b. **Develop message templates** in advance

    c. Draft **fact sheets, questions and answers, talking points**, and other supplementary materials for potential scenarios

6. OTHER

    a. A **signed endorsement** from the agency's director

    b. **First 12- and first 48-hour checklists**

    c. **Evaluate, revise and update** your plan regularly

7. COMMUNICATING WITH SPECIAL POPULATIONS

This Risk Communication Plan Template is divided into **seven subsections**, corresponding to the seven essential components of a risk communication plan (above). In each subsection, you will find the following tools:

1. **Background** information about the issue(s), explaining what the issue is and why it is important;
2. **Steps** to take to help you plan for the issue; and
3. **Forms, checklists, and/or templates** to help you document your processes to address the issue.

These tools are intended to provide **a starting point** for your agency as you develop and document each essential risk communication plan component. In some cases, you may want to adapt some of the templates or create new forms to meet your agency's specific needs.

For agencies that have <u>already developed and documented</u> their risk communication plans, this template may be useful as a guide to best practices in risk communication, and to identify any areas in the agency's plan that need further attention or development.